



NEWS

CONTACT: Fran Clader
(916) 657-7202

Media Relations Office
2555 First Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95818

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 30, 2009

09-32

MORE MOTORCYCLISTS TRAINED THANKS TO GRANT

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – As California's motorcycle population continues to multiply, more motorcyclists are being trained than ever before through the California Motorcyclist Safety Program (CMSP). Increased participation of new and current motorcycle riders in the CMSP is encouraging news for the California Highway Patrol (CHP) as this was one of the objectives of a recently concluded motorcycle safety campaign funded by a more than \$1.4 million dollar grant.

"Whether you're a new or returning rider, taking a motorcycle training course can improve your abilities to ride safely," said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. "We invite all motorcycle riders to raise their skills while keeping themselves and the roadways safe by attending this training."

In 2008, training numbers for CMSP reached an all-time high and exceeded 2007 by 23 percent. The 70,469 students trained in 2008 were the most pupils in any year since the beginning of the CMSP in 1986. A similar increase in the number of students is expected in 2009. While the increases as a result of the grant are promising, the CHP continues to urge new and returning motorcycle riders to attend a training class.

Funds were used by CHP to help raise awareness about CMSP through the media in an effort to enhance roadway safety and reduce the rising numbers of motorcyclist fatalities and injuries. During the past 10 years, there has been a 124 percent increase in the number of motorcyclists killed statewide.

Four large press events kicked off Motorcycle Awareness Month in May. The counties with the most motorcycle collisions – Alameda, Los Angeles, San Diego and Sacramento – hosted these events. There were also 40 CMSP promotional events statewide in May. The non-profit CMSP focuses on training and education and trains more students than any other state. Three 30-second Public Service Announcements in English and Spanish were produced and distributed to about 130 television stations statewide.

"With more than 1.2 million licensed motorcyclists in the state, the department will continue its efforts to increase awareness of motorcycles and encourage training for new and returning riders," said Commissioner Farrow. "However, it's important to remember, creating a safer highway environment is the shared responsibility of all drivers and motorcyclists alike."

California's motorcycle safety efforts garnered several national awards with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The CHP will be recognized at the IACP conference in Denver next week.

Funding for the campaign was provided by a grant from the Office of Traffic Safety.

#